

# ZIONISM

## *A Way of Life*

BY  
ARON HOROWITZ

*Issued by*  
FEDERATION OF YOUNG JUDAEA OF CANADA  
Western Division  
AND THE CALGARY SHARON ZIONIST CLUB



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# ZIONISM

## *A Way of Life*

BY

ARON HOROWITZ

*A Collection of Papers culled from the numerous addresses delivered in various Canadian Communities by A. Horowitz during his three years of service as Western Executive Director of the Zionist Organization of Canada, and as Educational Supervisor of all Western Canadian Hebrew Schools.*

*Issued by*

FEDERATION OF YOUNG JUDAEA OF CANADA  
Western Division  
AND THE CALGARY SHARON ZIONIST CLUB

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*Dedicated to my beloved brother  
Asher, who dedicated his life to the  
liberation and revival of our people,  
and to the freedom of Humanity.*

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## FOREWORD

"Zionism is the return of the Jews to Judaism even before their return to the Jewish land." These words were spoken by Theodore Herzl many years ago, at the first Zionist Congress at Basle. Their meaning today is still as crystal clear and as significant as it was at that historic moment, when the great Jewish leader founded the first tribunal of his people since its tragic dispersal from Eretz Israel.

This in effect is also the message that Rabbi Aron Horowitz has brought us in Western Canada in the short period that he has been among us. Amidst the strife and turmoil of our ordinary existence, it has sometimes been difficult to keep our faith undimmed, and our banner high. The process of the hardening of the arteries of a people, this spiritual sclerosis, has been one of the symptoms of our cultural inadequacy. To this condition, Rabbi Horowitz has ministered as an able and erudite physician, striving with might and main to bring about that renaissance in Jewish life which it most sadly needed.

Specifically, the problem of our Jewish youth in Western Canada has been painfully acute. There has arisen among us a generation "who knew not Joseph," a generation of young people lacking in faith, hope, and the burning idealism that has actuated Israel so long during the course of our history. To create this faith, to foster this revolution in our midst, Rabbi Horowitz has given of himself ceaselessly and unequivocally

with a tireless and unflinching resolve. Western Canadian Young Judaea and Jewish youth generally in this country owe him a debt which is well-nigh impossible to pay. If there are now faint glimmerings of a reawakening in our midst, if one can see now the rudimentary signs of a resurgence of a movement, all tribute must go to Rabbi Horowitz for a task which was splendidly done.

In sponsoring this booklet by our friend and teacher, we are conscious of the privilege which is ours. We are further conscious of the task which devolves upon us—to be true to the finest ideals of Judaism, and to the Zionism in which those ideals have found their fruition. In short, to us is entrusted the function of diffusing the precepts and teachings of our mentor.

NATHAN SAFRAN

*President, Western Division,  
Federation of Young Judaea of Canada.*

## PREFACE

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What should be the pattern of Jewish life in countries outside of Eretz Israel? What should be the function of the Zionist Movement in the education of the Jewish child and his relation to the Jewish people the world over?

These are but some of the questions which the reading of this booklet will bring to mind. These and other similar questions are as old as the dispersed Jewish nation. They were raised by our learned men of old, no less than by thinkers in modern times, and the answers have varied with the fortunes of the Jewish people and the tenor of the times in which they have lived.

The analysis of this age old problem has never been exhausted. Its urgency has been unexpectedly renewed by the onslaught on the Jew in the last decade. The present revival of methods of torture, long relegated to the Middle Ages and in a form more terrible than hitherto known in the history of Jewish martyrdom, has not only destroyed Jewish life in the Nazi dominated countries, but has robbed the Jew in every part of the world of a feeling of security and confidence in his way of life. Yet the comparative complacency of the Jewish community on this continent, in the face of this life and death struggle of the strongest branch of world Jewry, has made the clarification of the problem all the more imperative for those to whom the direction of Jewish youth is entrusted in our day.

The Jewish people has been justly proud of its youth that has always been quick to sense injustice and shown a readiness everywhere to sponsor the cause of the weak and the oppressed. The Jewish youth on this continent which has

likewise responded wholeheartedly to every movement that promised justice to the dispossessed, has been prone to ignore the injustice meted out to their people. This same youth that has followed keenly every contribution to industrial democracy and social justice has overlooked, as it were, the collective and co-operative movement of Palestine, and found in this outstanding national and social achievement of our time no outlet for their idealism and service. So paradoxical a position, in a period of phenomenal changes in our thinking, will doubtless stimulate youth and parents alike to find a way of identifying themselves with the hopes and problems of Jewish life, and enhance thereby their contribution to the welfare of the country in which they reside and to humanity as a whole.

Aaron Horowitz, the writer of this booklet, who is well acquainted with the specific problems of youth education in Canada and the United States, was born in Palestine. He brings to his addresses and writings the refreshing and stimulating approach of one who is steeped in the culture of his people and part and parcel of the pioneering life of Eretz Israel.

May this booklet help to awaken the Jewish youth of Canada and the United States to a sense of their role in the renaissance of our people. May it help to find in their midst those who will marshal all their efforts for the liberation of European Jewry and join with the builders of Eretz Israel in creating a home for the Jewish people.

MAY BERE-MEREMINSKI.

Winnipeg—Tel Aviv.

## A DESIGN FOR JEWISH LIVING

The cataclysmic events that have descended upon us in rapid succession have awakened both the conscience and consciousness of Jewry. People who but yesterday sheltered themselves in the fool's paradise of Emancipation have emerged from their crumbling shells and are re-identifying themselves with our people. Renegade sons who denied the nationhood of Israel and sought an escape in the "isms" of the moment found themselves of a sudden on a shattered foundation. Some have succumbed to despair, and those whose faith and spirit would not be crushed re-embraced their own people. In a word, Jewry is increasingly regaining the consciousness of its common lot, of its common destiny and history, and is seeking to reunite its scattered limbs into one healthy organism.

This reawakening presents at once a challenge and a boon to American Jewry. It is a challenge to the richest and strongest Jewish community in the world to assume its leading role in the political, cultural and spiritual rebirth of Israel. It is a boon to a community that had been in the process of disintegration because of the lack of a unifying force which in the past had been provided by the uniformity of life—religious and secular—in the ghetto and for which the era of emancipation had no substitute. The thing that must therefore be brought to the fore, out of the welter of problems and solutions, is the realization that we must find a "design for Jewish living" which will replace the former bonds of union. We

must test our innermost convictions and our attitudes towards ourselves, our children, our people and mankind generally. We must recognize the need of revolutionizing our whole life, the life of the individual as well as of the community; we must reshape our life in consonance with the fateful and historic task of our generation: "to correct the mistakes of generations, to heal the wounds of a people, and to rebuild its ruins upon a strong and sound foundation."

"A design for Jewish living" is the sine qua non of the hour. But what is to form the basis of the Design? Where is to be found the "Ru'ach Ha-Chayim," the breath of life that will infuse vitality into our "Atsamoth Y'veishoth", into the dry bones of our national organism? What is the vital factor that will weld us together culturally and spiritually?

There is a Jewish saying that "God in His mercy provides the salvation in advance of the affliction." Thus the old legend that the Messiah was born on the very day that the Temple was destroyed. This is merely a poetic expression of the deep faith of the Jewish people in their ultimate restoration to their pristine glory in their own land. The unique phenomenon of the perpetuity of the Jewish people throughout the long centuries of persecution and slaughter has been attributed to the uniformity of their life and religion. What is generally lost sight of, however, is that their whole life was permeated with the idea of "Geulah", with their yearning and aspiration to return to Zion; that the most potent factor which sustained them as a nation was the memory of their glorious past and their unshakable faith in their

future restoration. Does the history of mankind know of another people that has persisted with such tenacity in its memory of its past national life, as is expressed by the oath Israel has reiterated throughout his dispersion: "If I forget thee O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I remember thee not; if I set not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy." It was Disraeli who so well expressed the secret of Israel's immortality in the following words: "The vineyards of Israel have ceased to exist, but the eternal Law enjoins the children of Israel still to celebrate the vintage. A race that persists in celebrating their vintage although they have no fruits to gather will regain their vineyards."

If then we are to re-unite Israel upon a common national foundation, we must renew our faith in the Messiah; we must turn our eyes again to Zion; we must, in the words of Ahad-Haam, create a safe harbour for the Jewish spirit, "where it may blossom anew and recapture the strands which have begun to slip from its fingers."

The salvation of American Jewry as of all Israel thus lies in Zionism, not in philanthropic, nor even in mere political Zionism which seeks to transport "refugees" to a "new land," but in the old "Zionism" which aims to achieve the "Geulah Sh'leimah", the complete national and cultural Renaissance of our people. Without redemption in Eretz Israel, a national and cultural Renaissance is inconceivable, and without such a Renaissance there is no basis for a Jewish national existence in America. We must there-

fore infuse into our national life in America the new "breath of life" of our national culture which is in the process of revival in our Homeland.

The steps of the Messiah, of the Redeemer, can already be heard, for Israel has resumed its struggle for its national and spiritual liberation. *The success of this struggle will determine and—to a large extent—is also dependent upon the vitality of our national life on this continent, on the moral and spiritual strength of American Jewry.*

Eretz Israel and Golath Israel, Palestine and the Diaspora, are—at this stage of our struggle—like the Siamese twins. One is dependent upon the other. Without a healthy and conscious Jewry in the Golah, the rebuilding of Eretz Israel is impossible. Without Shivath Zion in the true sense of the word, there can be no healthy national existence in the Golah. Only a cultural and spiritual center in Eretz Israel will provide the basis for the conversion of the dualism of Jewish life into "a Design for Jewish Living" in which the best of Hebraic and English culture will be blended into a harmonious whole.

September, 1939.



## THE MISSION OF ZIONISM

*Address delivered at the National Convention of the Zionist Organization of Canada, held in Montreal during January 19, 20, 1941.*

I know I am repeating what has become a platitude when I say that Zionism in America—and to a certain extent, in all other parts of the Galuth—has been based on charity and crises. It is true that this is a generalization, and—like many other generalizations, is not entirely correct. For one thing, it does not account for the historical forces and circumstances that are responsible for this situation. Nevertheless, if we are to be honest with ourselves, we must admit that there is very much truth in this statement. We cannot deny that Zionism is one of the most confused and abused concepts. To some people Zionism means the transportation of all Jews to Palestine, while to others it signifies the giving of succour to our “unfortunate brethren” by settling them in Palestine, where they will be safe from persecution and slaughter. The quip thus originated that “A Zionist is a person who approaches a second person for a donation in order to settle a third person in Palestine.”

What is the mission of Zionism? Does Zionism imply the mere raising of funds for the rebuilding of Palestine? Does it confine itself to the physical rebuilding of our Homeland for those of our people who are expelled from their countries of birth or adoption? In other words, does the mission of Zionism begin and end with the

rebuilding of Palestine, or has Zionism a mission also for the Jews of those parts of the Dispersion who never intend to go to Palestine?

Again, if we want to be honest, we must admit that Zionism on this continent has considered its mission to be essentially one of fund-raising for the rebuilding of Eretz Israel. Whatever the cause or causes of this situation may be: whether it is to be attributed to the fact that the past years have been wrought with so many difficulties, so many tragedies, that we have perforce had to concentrate on the alleviation of the sufferings of our people: or whether the cause of this situation is to be found in the fact that the past generation has been steeped in the fool's paradise of assimilation and has simply not been prepared to respond to our Movement's call for cultural and spiritual revival, the fact is that the Zionist Movement has, in the main, followed almost the same methods that have been employed by the ideological philanthropists, against whose entire program and philosophy—or lack of program and philosophy—the Zionist Movement revolted. In other words, instead of propagating Zionism, instead of bringing it to the fore as a movement of national, cultural and spiritual revival, or as the renewed expression of the indomitable will of our people to renewed national life, as against assimilation, the movement for self negation and for the gradual destruction of our national will-to-live, Zionism concentrated, or—if you will—has had to concentrate on proving *that it is the best form of philanthropy*.

In order to illustrate the fact that Zionism has concentrated on fund-raising and has neglected

to cultivate its own soul, Mr. Bistritzky, the staunchest fighter for what he calls the fourth sphere of our national politics, the political policy of national education, tells the following little story: At a certain school, where the children were trained to deposit a coin every day in the J.N.F. Box, above which hung the photograph of Dr. Herzl, one of the children exclaimed one day while depositing the coin, "This gentleman likes a lot of money." I have actually experimented and have asked young people to tell me the first association of ideas that the word Zionism brings to their minds. The immediate and snap reply was: "Fund raising."

Herein lies at least part of the secret of our Movement's failure to lay hold on the imagination, the heart, the soul of our people, especially of our youth. It is because we have not made the word "Zionism" evoke thoughts of national regeneration, cultural and spiritual renaissance, the renewal of national life and dignity, that Zionism has gradually become another form, albeit the best and most constructive form of philanthropy.

If Zionism is to fulfill its real and true mission, we must return to it its real meaning; we must return to it its soul. We must make it clear that Zionism is the antithesis to assimilationism, that Zionism is the return to ourselves, to our cultural and spiritual heritage as well as to our corporeal national existence. We must renew the declaration of our relentless war against the disease of assimilation which has eaten into our national organism. The rebuilding of Palestine then becomes a need that arises out of our will

to live. Eretz Israel then becomes translated into an imperative need for national premises to continue to develop our national life and history. This imperative need does not then arise only from the fact that millions of our people are homeless and are in dire need of a haven of refuge; it finds its roots also in the reawakening of our people from their national lethargy, in their regaining their unconquerable desire for cultural and spiritual rejuvenation. American Jewry is then just as much in need of Palestine as Palestine is in need of American Jewry. In other words, Zionism is at one and the same time the rebuilding of our Homeland for the physical and cultural preservation of our people and the rebuilding of our people to make possible the rebuilding of our Homeland and the continuity of our national life in the Golah.

This brings us to the old question as to what comes first, the rebuilding of the land or the rebuilding of the people. To this question we must give the old answer, namely, that neither of these comes first, but that they both come together, that one is impossible without the other. Zionism in the Golah must therefore be not only a means to an end, a means of raising funds for the rebuilding of a National Home, but also an end in itself, a way of life, our philosophy of our national and cultural continuity. The various spheres of Jewish life in the Golah, therefore, cannot and may not be separated into those in which Zionism has a stake and those in which Zionism has no stake. Zionism must be conceived not as one corner in our life, but as a complete approach to every aspect

of Jewish life. It must permeate all our existence as Jews. In a word, it must become synonymous with Judaism.

It therefore follows that the Zionist problem in the Diaspora is essentially one of education. For we must first infuse a Ruach Chaim, a breath of life, into our "Atzamoeth Yveishoth", into the dry bones of our national organism so that our people should will redemption and revival. *If we do not want Zionism to be based on the fluctuation of the political market; if we do not want Zionists "al tnai," people who are Zionists on condition; if we want Zionists "shel af al pi chen", people who are Zionists in spite of all difficulties and in the teeth of all obstacles; if we want to give vitality to our movement; if we want to bring forth our inherent positive forces, we must re-shape and re-mould the cultural and spiritual life of our people in the Galuth.* As our great teacher Achad Haam expresses it so well: Only by learning to understand to value the ideas for which we have stood in the past can we become capable of desiring to stand for something in the present and the future.

It then becomes evident that if we are not floundering and if we really want to achieve the revolution of Zionism, we must educate and prepare the young generation to make possible the realization of that revolution.

I know that some practical people, who see only the moment and who deal only in figures, will maintain that at a time when the entire foundation of Jewish life is shaking and millions of our people are being uprooted, we have no time for the cultivation of the spirit and that we

must therefore concentrate on the raising of more and more funds. I should like to call the attention of these people to the fact that without education, it will become increasingly difficult to raise funds. I shall now tell you one of my many experiences. We were discussing the difficulties of fund raising at the home of one of the most active Zionists in Western Canada, when his young daughter exclaimed: "Daddy, if you find it so difficult to raise money for Palestine, you can imagine how difficult it will be for me." Let the practical people remember that if we will not give earnest attention to the problem of bringing back our youth to us, the time will not be far when it will be almost impossible even to raise funds. Let those people remember that it was not charity that has preserved our people to this day, that it was not charity that gave us courage to suffer all the agony, all the humiliations, persecutions and slaughters. It was the spirit of our people, their readiness for Kidush Hashem that has given them courage to defy our mortal enemies and to continue to live in spite of their tremendous blows. *Let us not forget that it is not charity that begot this spirit, but that this spirit begot also charity.*

We should therefore make it clear that Eretz Israel and Golath Israel, Palestine and the Diaspora, are, at this stage of our struggle, like the Siamese Twins—one is dependent upon the other. We must make it clear that just as there can be no healthy national existence in the Golah without Shivath Zion in the true sense of the word, the rebuilding of Zion is impossible without a healthy and conscious Jewry in at least

parts of the Golah. If our Movement is therefore not one of the moment or the hour, we must give the utmost attention to what constitutes the roots of the tree. It is true that most people see only the tree. But it is the roots that enable the tree to live and grow. Every national movement, good or bad, understands this simple truism. Even the totalitarian states, which have all the means of brutal force, must employ propaganda and education for the preservation of their life. Certainly we who have no other force but education must not neglect this mightiest of all forces.

And let no one say that this is not the task of the Zionist Organization. If our Movement will not assume this duty, the products of the educational process will be entirely different from what we want them to be. And let us not forget that any movement that depends on other organizations to fulfill its functions, especially the functions of cultivating the soldiery that is to continue its struggle and life, that such a movement will not live for long.

We are now in an age of transition, when Jewish life on this continent is assuming shape and form. If our Movement wants this life to develop in accordance with its living principles, Zionism will have to consider its mission in the Golah to be the reorganization and revitalization of our national life. It lies within the power of our Movement in this country to greatly influence the shape of our life. The question is whether it will understand its mission and whether it will not, in the welter of fund-raising, forget and neglect what is the most important

thing, the cultivation of the soul of our great Movement.

I know the need, the tremendous need, the desperate need for funds, for far greater funds than we have been obtaining. As a Palestinian I know the value of funds. I maintain, however, that *the best and surest way of raising the funds we need is through education, through the re-awakening of our will-to-live.*

We can begin a new era for our Movement by reviving one of the ancient principles of Israel, namely, the cardinal principle that puts Torah, education, above everything else. Let us therefore adopt, along with our other three national spheres of politics—our foreign policy, our settlement policy and our financial policy—let us also adopt an educational policy.

I am reminded of a story I heard from one of our leaders. A pious Christian lady, who was in charge of the charitable work in her village, wrote to the priest and requested him to tell her of some new methods of fund-raising. The good lady had tried all known methods and still found it impossible to raise the necessary funds. Whereupon the priest answered her that the best method of fund-raising is by practicing Christianity. *The best and surest way of fund-raising for the needs of Zionism is to practice Zionism, real and full-blooded Zionism. Let us therefore cultivate the soul of our Movement; let us cultivate Zionists who will practice Zionism. This will be the best and surest way of receiving the utmost our people can give for the continuation of our struggle for liberation and revival.*



## ZIONISM AND JEWISH EDUCATION

Someone has said that a great deal of the confusion in the minds of people regarding the vital issues of mankind may be attributed to the lack of a true and clear definition of the terms that designate the various forces of life and the aspirations of humanity, terms such as "Education," "Democracy" and "Liberty." If this be true of general human concepts, it is doubly true of the terms "Zionism" and "Jewish Education" in their popular usage in this country. For both Zionism and Jewish education are among the most confused and abused concepts. To some people Zionism means the transportation of all Jews to Palestine, while to others it signifies the giving of succor to our "unfortunate brethren" by settling them in Palestine, where they would be safe from persecution and slaughter.

The confusion in the sphere of Jewish education is even greater than in the sphere of Zionism. Almost everything passes for Jewish education, from teaching the child to recite the "Haftorah" to teaching him to speak a "Jewish language." In the case of Jewish education, we can truly agree with Professor John Dewey that "Education becomes the art of taking advantage of the helplessness of the young."

Obviously we cannot go much further without first determining what we mean by "Zionism" and "Jewish Education." If we adopt Herbert Spencer's simple definition of the aim of education as being "the preparation for complete living," then in speaking of "Jewish" education we

must imply that there is a specific and distinct Jewish way of living for which we wish to prepare our children. If we adopt John Stuart Mill's definition of education as "the culture which each generation purposely gives to those who are to be its successors, in order to qualify them for at least keeping up, and if possible for raising the level of improvement which has been attained," then in speaking of "Jewish" education we must have in mind a specific Jewish culture which we want to pass on to the next generation.

I would therefore say that the aim of Jewish education should be to provide suitable conditions and facilities for the creation of a Jewish personality that will draw his cultural and spiritual sustenance from the rich heritage of Israel, a personality that will see himself as part of a living Jewish community and will participate in all phases of its life. Since the Jew living in any part of the Dispersion must of necessity live a dual cultural and spiritual existence, a proper definition of Jewish education must include the aim of the harmonization of Hebrew culture with that of the country wherein one lives.

If then education is the preparation for complete living and the passing on of a nation's culture to its succeeding generation, we can readily understand the cause of the—to say the least—abnormal state of Jewish education in this country. For there can be no preparation for complete Jewish living, without the existence of a distinct cultural and spiritual Jewish life. In other words, Jewish education as we have known it on this continent is the product of the sterile and bloodless life of the past generation, a gen-

eration that embraced assimilation as the panacea to the ills of Jewry. We have therefore had Jewish education without Judaism, an education in which the great cultural heritage of our people and their hopes and aspirations for revival had played no part. The little Judaism we have had was expunged from all its national and cultural content. Judaism ceased to be a civilization, an all embracing philosophy of life, and was relegated to the status of a creed. In the words of Ch. N. Bialik, "a nation of three thousand years' existence suddenly made the self-calumniating announcement that it had no culture of its own and had to go to learn from others. The nation that was the first to create a school for children of the people became a child at the school of strangers. The culture of Israel, of four thousand years duration, was declared worthless."

With the advent of Modern Zionism, and especially with the appearance of the "Dor Haagshamah," the generation of achievement in Zionism, there started a turning point in our history. The disintegrating force, the disease of assimilation which had eaten into the organism of our people was checked, and the National and Cultural Renaissance which was brought to real life in our Homeland spread its resuscitating wings to all places where there is still a semblance of Jewish cultural and spiritual life.

This brings us to the very important question as to what part Zionism is to play in the revitalization of Jewish life. We must, however, first make it very clear that by Zionism we do not mean only the physical rebuilding of Palestine for those of our people who are expelled from

their countries of birth or adoption. A proper definition of Zionism must include, as it does, the national cultural and spiritual renaissance of the Jewish people. In speaking of our renaissance we do not refer, of course, to Palestine alone, but to wherever there is a living Jewish community.

The lack of understanding of the true meaning of Zionism gave rise to wrong notions that have caused a great deal of confusion in the minds of our people. In cases where these notions are given circulation in a deliberate attempt to misrepresent and misinterpret the great ideal of Zionism, the only thing that can be said is that they are machinations of people who have not yet abandoned their desire of extinguishing the hope of Israel for "Shivath Zion" and "Geulah". One of these notions is that "the Zionists are disinterested in and indifferent to the cultural and spiritual destiny of Jewry in the Diaspora"! Apparently the people who hold or spread this notion would have us believe that Zionism considers Jewry to exist for Palestine rather than Palestine for Jewry.

It seems absurd that we should have to point out that the rebuilding of Palestine is meant for Jewry of the Diaspora, including those Jews "who will never have to go to Palestine." For if we are to give meaning and content to Jewish life in any part of the Diaspora we, as all other nations, must have natural ground for the normal growth of our national culture. In order that there should be American Jews or English Jews, we must have one place where there can be Jewish Jews. Zionism does not deny the possibility of the existence of a Judaism with

character and distinctiveness in the Diaspora. It does maintain, however, that for the preservation and evolution of a living Judaism outside of Palestine we must have our own national premises in Palestine.

Another wrong idea which arises out of the notion that the Zionists are disinterested in Diaspora Jewry, is that Zionism has neglected Education. While it is true that the Zionist Organization in various countries, including Canada, has failed to wield its influence for the systematization and revitalization of Hebrew Education, it is not the fault of Zionism that some of its representatives in certain countries have not yet grasped the full significance of our Renaissance Movement for the regeneration and normalization of some aspects of Jewish life in the Golah. Those who know the full meaning of Zionism are aware that it does not confine itself to the rebuilding of Palestine. Zionism is concerned with the organization and revitalization of Jewish life wherever it is to be found. It aims to achieve the reappearance of the Jewish people as a nation in the fullest sense of the term and to bring about the cultural and spiritual unification of all Jewry through the establishment of a cultural and spiritual centre in our ancient-new land. Zionism seeks to reshape our life in the Diaspora and to bring it in contact with our national revival in the Homeland.

Jewish education is therefore the quintessence of Zionism in the Golah. For without the education, "the preparation" of the rising generation to build its life in the Diaspora in consonance with our national renaissance, there is no ground in which Zionism can strike its roots. Further-

more, without the preparation of the rising generation for our great and difficult national tasks, Zionism, the movement that has assumed our struggle for liberation and revival, will be doomed to failure.

We believe the time to be ripe for the achievement of the revolution of Zionism in the fullest sense of the term. We believe that without the ideal of Zionism, without the wind to move the sails of the boat, Jewish education is devoid of all meaning and content. This simple truth was recognized by European Jewry even a generation ago. We thus witnessed in Poland, in Lithuania and in other countries the rise of the Tarbuth Educational System, a whole net of primary, secondary and high institutions of Jewish learning which were under the direction and guidance of the Zionist movement. In the U.S.A. Jewish educators have also come to the realization that our national and cultural renaissance must be the foundation of our education. Here in Western Canada we created only a year ago an educational body, the Council for Jewish education, whose aim is to revitalize our education and to bring it in harmony with our renaissance. At the last convention of the Hebrew schools of Western Canada, the hope was expressed that our Council of Jewish Education will eventually play in this country the same role that the "Tarbuth" schools have played in Poland and Lithuania.

October, 1940.

March 27, 1941.

## MEMORANDUM

*To Mr. A. J. Frieman, President, Zionist Organization of  
Canada, on the Policy of the Zionist Organization  
With Regard to Jewish Education.*

On August 20, 1939, three months after I assumed my present office, I submitted a memorandum to the Zionist Organization on "Zionist activities in Western Canada". In that memorandum, I made the following observations on Jewish Education:

"To me Jewish education is the foundation of our movement. If our youth movement (granting that such a movement is in existence) is based on a very shaky foundation, it is, to a large extent, due to the fact that our youth did not receive a Jewish education at all, or, if they did receive some kind of Jewish education, its basis was not our national and cultural renaissance. We have, for example, some good schools in Western Canada, but they are 'good' schools only from the point of view that they succeed in imparting to their pupils some knowledge of Hebrew, Bible and Ancient Jewish History. From the point of view of national and cultural rebirth, and the education of our children to participate in the rebuilding of Eretz Israel, the education they receive is very much the same as it was before the appearance of Practical Zionism. Our children's ignorance of the most elementary knowledge of Zionism and modern

Eretz Israel is appalling. That is why the graduates of even our 'good' schools do not constitute the sources from which our youth movement should and could draw its forces.

"It is, therefore, obvious that if we are to strengthen the structure of our movement, we must first make sure that its foundation be sound and firm. I propose the following program for our schools:

"1. The creation of an Educators' Council whose primary functions will be:

(a) To find ways and means of teaching our children "Be-ru-ach Ha-mo-le-deth" (in the spirit of our Homeland.)

(b) To educate our children to participate in the rebuilding of Eretz Israel through active work for our national funds.

"I have no doubt that if we succeed in creating a good Educators' Council it will not only fulfil these functions, but will also succeed in the systematization and revitalization of Jewish education in Western Canada.

"I should like to stress the fact that an active program for the Hebrew schools will serve also as a means of penetration into the Jewish home."

On December 27, 1940, I submitted a report of the activities of the Western Division, in which I referred as follows to the work of the Educators' Council:

"A conference of Hebrew Educators and communal-workers was held in October, 1939. As a result of this conference, the Council for Jewish Education was set up, with a view to centralizing and revitalizing Jewish education and making it an integral part of Zionist activities. The



Council has made a good beginning, and it is to be hoped that, with greater assistance of the Zionist organization, Jewish education in Western Canada will gradually be brought under the direct influence and supervision of the Zionist Movement. To date, the Council has to its credit the following accomplishments:

(1) Two Conferences took place, one in Winnipeg in October, 1939, and the other in Calgary in July, 1940.

(2) The Western Executive Director of the Z.O. was elected Educational Supervisor of the Hebrew Schools. His function is to inspect all schools and to co-operate with the local educational committees, in the solution of their educational problems.

(3) A uniform curriculum, including the subject "Palestine and Zionism", has been adopted as the basis of our educational system.

(4) Uniform examinations will be given this year for the first time in the schools of the larger centres.

(5) An annual scholarship of \$100.00 has been established to enable one student each year to attend the Hebrew Teachers' Seminary. A number of prizes will also be distributed annually in order to stimulate competition and scholarship.

(6) A Seminary has been established for the training of teachers for the smaller centres.

(7) It was recognized that the National and Cultural Renaissance of our people is the foundation of our educational system.

"I should like to emphasize that if the Council for Jewish Education is to strike permanent roots

and continue its activities, the Zionist Organization will have to give it much greater moral and financial support than it has received until now."

Before I proceed to make concrete suggestions, I should like to emphasize the following:

(a) In my opinion, the greatest need of Zionism in this country is to identify it with Jewish life. If Zionism is to become a vital force in our national life, we must assume the responsibility of influencing and shaping the cultural and spiritual life of Canadian Jewry. If the Zionist Organization of Canada agrees to what seems to me to be an axiom, then we must certainly assume certain obligations in the field of Jewish Education.

(b) During the two years that I have been in Western Canada it has become increasingly clear to me that the improvement and centralization of Jewish Education is one of the most difficult problems that Canadian Jewry is faced with. This problem is especially acute in the smaller centres. It is clear that individual communities cannot possibly undertake to even attempt to solve this difficult problem, which could and should be tackled only by a National Organization. I am convinced that Canadian Jewry will look for guidance and leadership to that national organization which will assume this important task.

(c) While in other countries it may be difficult for the Zionist Organization to bring the Jewish educational system under its direct supervision, there is no doubt in my mind that we can do it in Canada. It is true that we will have to overcome certain obstacles, but I am convinced

that if the Zionist Organization declares Jewish Education to be an integral part of its national policy, the various communities will abide by the decision of our Movement. (In connection with the points I have mentioned, I would suggest that you read the address on "Zionism and Jewish Education," which I delivered at the Zionist Convention in Montreal. A copy is enclosed herewith.)

Now to come to the concrete suggestions:

(1). I consider it of the utmost importance that our Organization should establish a Department of Education and Culture, the functions of which will be:

(a) To organize a national Council of Jewish Education under the auspices of our Organization. The work of this Council will be to carry out the program I have outlined in my above mentioned article, or any other program that will be prepared by our Organization.

(b) To prepare educational programs and material for the various communities. The lack of such material forms one of the major problems in our Zionist work. To give you one example, I have organized Educational Committees in every one of the larger centres in Western Canada. It is clear, however, that those committees must be provided with suggestions and suitable material. Under our present set up, it is impossible for any one of the Directors to attend to this work properly.

(c) To co-operate with and offer guidance to our Youth Movement.

(d) To consider ways and means of training leaders for our Youth.

(e) To co-ordinate as much as possible the educational and cultural activities of the various branches of our Movement.

With regard to the budget of this department, I am confident that if the Zionist Organization will undertake to work towards the improvement and centralization of Jewish Education, every school that will be affiliated with our Council will be glad to contribute a nominal fee annually towards its budget. We have found in Western Canada that most of our affiliated schools are ready to make such a contribution. This will bring in an income of several thousand dollars a year. The balance should be met by our Organization.

In closing, I wish to say that I realize that I am suggesting that our Organization should undertake a very difficult and great responsibility. Nevertheless, I for one, feel certain that the future of our Movement in this country depends on what we are going to do in this most important field.

## THE ROLE OF HEBREW IN OUR NATIONAL RENAISSANCE

Voltaire, the French philosopher, used to say: "If you wish to converse with me, define your terms." If we would follow the example of Voltaire, many a long article would be considerably shorter and many speeches would be entirely superfluous. I shall therefore discuss our subject by defining as briefly and simply as possible the terms "Language," "National Renaissance" and "Hebrew."

Language, according to the dictionary, is "speech peculiar to a nation." We can therefore say that what speech is to the individual, language is to a nation, that just as speech is essential to the individual for the expression of his thoughts and personality, so is language essential for the very existence of a nation and for the expression of its individuality. To take away language from a nation is tantamount to depriving the individual of his power of speech. In a word, language is one of the primary things that make up a people of common origin and culture.

While we are on this subject, I should like to relate a recent incident which has a bearing on this question. The Welsh members in the British Parliament demanded a short time ago that the ration booklets should be printed in the Welsh language for Welsh people. England is fighting for her very life. The British Parliament is pre-occupied with matters of life and death not only

for the nation and the Empire but for all Humanity. Yet men with self-respect and dignity do not hesitate even at this fateful moment to demand the right for the preservation of their national personality. And no one would dare question the loyalty of the Welsh to Britain because of this incident. The Welsh are a living people, and people who are alive are possessed of a strange habit of wanting to continue to live. We thus see that language is one of the main attributes of nationhood and that if a nation lives it also keeps its language alive.

This brings us to the definition of the term "National Renaissance." Renaissance means revival, or a new birth. When we speak of Renaissance we refer to the entrance of a certain nation upon a new stage of greater vitality and creativity. National Renaissance therefore implies that a given nation has, because of certain circumstances, been in a decadent stage and is now entering upon a period of revived national vigor and creativity. In the case of the Jewish people, they had been in a deteriorating state because of the loss of their national Homeland, which deprived them of the possibility to exercise their national spirit, their national personality. Their rebirth is made possible by their return to their Homeland, where they are free to continue and develop their national life.

To us Zionists it is an axiom that without a tangible Homeland, without private national premises, we can have, in the words of Ch. N. Bialik, "no sort of a life, either material or spiritual." Those who deny the necessity of a national Homeland for the continuation of our national life fling at us the argument that the

Jewish people have existed for 2,000 years without national premises. Irrespective of whether this life has been good or bad, there is one important and irrefutable fact that those people overlook, namely, that if not for the unshakable faith of our people that some day that life would definitely end and a new independent life begin in our ancient land, they would not have been able to go through twenty centuries of humiliation, agony, persecution and slaughter. It was their tenacious memory of their pristine glory and their yearning for and deep faith in the renewal of that glory which kept them alive. Their yearning for and faith in the restoration of Palestine was so great that temporarily—and only temporarily—it ceased to be for them a geographical place and became rather a state of mind. They carried Palestine—as it were—in their heart and soul. Palestine to them became like Boston to that Bostonian who, when asked during the Spanish-American war what he thought of the possibility that his native city would be bombarded by the Spanish fleet, exclaimed in amazement: "Bombard Boston! How can one bombard Boston? Boston is not a place—it is a state of mind. It is as possible to shoot at Boston as it is possible to shoot at Justice and Beauty."

We therefore seized upon the first opportunity to rebuild our Homeland. With characteristic Jewish faith, determination and even stubbornness we have been building for the past two generations what today forms the indestructible foundation of the Jewish Commonwealth. We thus find ourselves now in the midst of a National Renaissance which will bring together

again the people, the land and the Culture of Israel.

This brings us to the question of the role of Hebrew in our Renaissance. The dictionary defines Hebrew as the language of the Jewish people. There are some Jews who think that this language has been dead and that the Jewish people, in the Galuth at least, have substituted another Jewish language for the ancient Hebrew tongue. The least that we can say to those people is that they are entirely wrong. All those who know Jewish history are very well aware that Hebrew has been living in the writings, in the heart, in the soul, and even in the mouths of the living Jews. A national language is dead only if its people is dead. The living Jewish people have therefore preserved their national language for over 2,000 years and through the greatest storms and avalanches. Even when they developed new vernaculars, their national language—Hebrew—was still used by them as the medium of their cultural and spiritual expression. They prayed to God in Hebrew; they wrote it in their books; they even used it for their contracts of every sort and for their business letters. In other words, *they have kept their language alive to the same degree that they have been alive.* As soon, therefore, as the Jewish national spirit came in contact again with the land of its birth, the national Jewish language, too, assumed new life and vitality. For Hebrew serves as the mortar that cements the physical and spiritual structure of our Homeland. Hebrew has already welded together the manifold scattered tribes of our people into one Hebrew nation in Eretz Israel. As a matter of



fact, only fools will argue today that any other language should or could supersede Hebrew as the national language of our people in Palestine.

Unfortunately, there still is, however, difference of opinion with regard to the necessity and value of Hebrew in the Golah. The fact that many of our people have not grasped yet the importance of Hebrew for the preservation of our national life in the Diaspora is, to a very large extent, due to the erroneous interpretation of the mission of Zionism. For decades we have been speaking of what American Jewry can do and is doing for Palestine, but we have failed to say what Palestine can do and is doing for American Jewry. We have failed to emphasize that without Palestine, without a place where the Jewish people are free to continue and develop their national life and history, Judaism in America and in all other parts of the Galuth will gradually disintegrate. We have failed to bring to the fore the undeniable fact that if Diaspora Jewry is to have a healthy national life, there must be some power to supplant the unifying force which in the past had been provided by our uniformity of life in the Ghetto. It should be clear to us all that if there can be any difference of opinion as to what degree Palestine can and will serve as a political centre for Jewry, there can be no doubt that Palestine—and Palestine alone—can and will serve as the cultural and spiritual centre of all Israel.

*It then follows that if the revived Hebrew nation in Eretz Israel is to provide the unifying basis for Diaspora Jewry, they will have to understand—not necessarily speak—the language in which the Jewish people is and will be creating*

*its cultural and spiritual values.* Hebrew will thus serve not only as the key to the great heritage of Israel, but also as the means of contact with our spiritual Homeland. It will serve as the bridge that will connect all the scattered Jews with their Homeland, and as the mortar that will cement our national life in the Golah.

We believe in the old prophecy: "For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of God from Jerusalem." We believe with the English novelist George Eliot that "when Israel shall have an organic centre, the world will gain as Israel gains." In the short years that the Jewish people have had the opportunity to exercise their national individuality and genius in their own land, they have already created new cultural and spiritual values. We therefore believe with some of the greatest non-Jews that the revival of the Hebrew spirit in Eretz Israel will be a blessing not only to the Jewish people but also to mankind. In a civilized new world, the Jews of the Diaspora will serve as the mediators between their spiritual Homeland and all the other nations of the world. By means of the Hebrew language they will convey to Israel in its ancestral land the finest and best in the thought of other nations, and through their knowledge of Hebrew, they will convey to the world the great ideas and ideals of Israel.

We can foresee the day when Jews all over the world will again know the language of the Book of Books and will use it as the medium of their cultural and spiritual expression. Already today Hebrew is taught in many high schools in New York and in great universities throughout the world. Is it a mere dream to believe that

with the restoration of the Jewish nation, its national tongue, too, will take its place in every civilized country among the other living and creative languages of mankind!

September, 1941.

## THE MISSION OF THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY

As one ascends Mount Scopus, the first view that strikes his eyes are the tombs of those who fell in the conquest of Palestine by Great Britain and who thus made possible, in the first instance, the Palestine and the Hebrew University of today. Immediately following this impressive graveyard, one sees the chain of magnificent buildings that compose the Hebrew University. This accidental outlay may be taken as a symbol that nothing worth while can be attained without devotion and self-sacrifice. It is as if those graves were telling us that in order to reach the Hebrew University, in order to fulfil the mission it represents, we must first be prepared to give it our love and devotion just as those young men gave their lives for making possible what they believed would be a better humanity and a better world.

What is the mission of the Hebrew University?

In seeking to understand the mission of the University of the new Zion, we must know what motivated those who conceived the idea of the University. It is not generally known, nor is it a mere accident, that it was the same man—Prof. Rabbi (I emphasize both attributes) Hermann Schapira—who was the father of both the Jewish National Fund and of the Hebrew University. For to Rabbi Schapira “Shivath Zion,” the return of Israel to Zion, did not signify the mere transportation of persecuted and homeless Jews to a Jewish land. “Shivath

Zion" to Rabbi Schapira meant, as it did to all the fathers of our Auto-Emancipation, the return of Israel Home in order to be able to resume the building of the House of the Lord, in order to be able to continue freely our eternal quest for truth and beauty and justice. We therefore find that the spirit of the Torah is embodied in the principles of the Jewish National Fund and that the father of the Jewish National Fund could not conceive of physical rejuvenation without spiritual rebirth, in consonance with the ancient dictum "Israel Ve'Oreisah Chad Hu", Israel and the Torah are one. It was because of this reason that Prof. Schapira declared that the interest our people will reveal in a Hebrew University in Eretz Israel would serve as a barometer to gauge the real zeal and power of the movement for a new Zion.

We must therefore remember that the Hebrew University is not merely another house of learning where the sciences are studied and furthered. We, the Jewish people, must conceive of the Hebrew University as an organic part of our Renaissance in our ancient-new land. I have heard it said that the mission of the Hebrew University is to build a home for the Jewish mind and spirit in the same way that Palestine itself is to provide a home for the Jewish people. I would not separate the two, spirit and matter, the Hebrew University and the Jewish people. I would say that *the mission of our University is to serve as the directive force in the shaping of a new Hebrew civilization in the Land that gave to the world, to all humanity, the greatest spiritual values.*

When we were driven from our Land we took

along with us the Bible, which is still considered the greatest contribution to human civilization, the Bible wherein you find Democracy in its best and highest forms. During our long years of exile, we have not been able to make any great contribution as a nation. For with our expulsion from our own land, we were deprived of the possibility and of the right that every creative people has: to allow the free exercise of its national genius, of its national creative powers. Whatever was contributed by Jewish scientists and philosophers cannot be considered and is not recognized as the creation of the Jewish people. It is true that every great work belongs to humanity, but before it can be passed on to humanity, it must first pass through the national filter. It is true that Shakespeare belongs to mankind, but Shakespeare is the essence of the creative spirit of England. It is true that the Bible belongs to all humanity, but the Bible is the essence of the creative spirit of Israel. *And the Bible could be created by the Jewish people, not by Jewish individuals living in other lands, just as Shakespeare is a product of England, and the English people who are rooted to their own soil.*

Now that we are returning home, we are taking back with us not only the Bible, but also the harvests and experiences of many nations and ages.

It is therefore the mission of the Hebrew University, which is the crowning glory of our Rebirth, to pick up the thread of Jewish knowledge, of the Jewish creative spirit, and weave it into a fabric which will embody the best of the old and the best of the new and which will

be a synthesis of East and West. In the words of Prof. Joseph Klausner, "The Hebrew University is seeking to create men who for the first time in centuries, perhaps in millennia, will combine the priceless treasures of Hebrew thought with the world's richest ideas, bringing in this fusion a new spirit and a new lease of life to humanity."

It would be futile to ask at this stage whether the Hebrew University has fulfilled its mission. This question will have to be answered by future generations. And it depends very much on our generation both in the Golah and in Eretz Israel what that answer will be.

At present it speaks well for us that in 16 short years, the Hebrew University has grown from a small and unimportant school to the largest and most important Jewish scientific institution in the world. The University began with one building, 164 students, a faculty of 30, and a curriculum of 12 courses devoted exclusively to research. Now the University has 18 buildings, four faculties (Science, Humanities, Medicine and Agriculture); a library of over 350,000 volumes; a student body of over 1,200 and a large staff of teachers and professors, among whom are to be found some of the greatest scientists in the world. In a word, our University is playing an important and essential role in the upbuilding of our Homeland and is now making a significant contribution in our present struggle against barbarism and for the preservation of civilization and of the eternal cultural and spiritual values of Humanity.

All that can therefore be said now is that Palestine, and the Hebrew University as its guiding

spirit, is pointing to a new life, which if allowed to develop will hold forth a new hope and a new promise to the Jewish people. For the first sprouts of a new civilization have already been observed by those who have come in contact with the spirit of the new Palestine.

If Jewry will understand the historic tasks of our generation, if it will appreciate the significance of the Hebrew University in our national and spiritual Renaissance and will participate in that great epic in the making in Eretz Israel, then we may believe with our great national poet Chaim Nahaman Bialik, who said 16 years ago at the opening of the University.

"The Books of Chronicles, the last of the Scriptures, are not the last in the History of Israel. To these small books there will be added a third, perhaps more important than the first two. And if the first two books of Chronicles begin with Adam, Seth and Noah and end with the Proclamation of Cyrus, which three hundred years later brought the gospel to the heathen of old, the third will undoubtedly begin with the Proclamation of Balfour and will end with a new Gospel, the Gospel of Redemption to the whole of humanity."

April, 1941.



## Ch. N. BIALIK: MODERN PROPHET OF ISRAEL

*All the quotations from Bialik's poems are taken from the translation by Maurice Samuels.*

In our struggle for the liberation of our people and the rebuilding of our Homeland, we have taken stock of all our material achievements, but we have said little or nothing of the things of the spirit we have created. We have counted the half a million dunams of land acquired by us for the nation, but we have said very little of the principles governing the settlement and cultivation of the land. We have pointed with pride at the hundreds of colonies we have established, but we have been unmindful of the new forms of social and spiritual life in those colonies. We have spoken of the millions of trees we have planted, of the numerous industries and factories we have founded and of our conquest of many new fields of economic endeavor. We have kept silent, however, about the revival of our language, the new meaning and significance we have given to our holidays, the over eight thousand Hebrew books printed in our Land during the past twenty years, the rich harvest of the literature, poetry, drama, music and folk-lore of the first generation of free and normal Jews.

This fact may perhaps be the answer to the question as to why Bialik is the less known in the "Galuth"—I emphasize "in the Galuth"—of the two great leaders, Herzl and Bialik, who have become the symbol of our physical and spiritual

rebirth. Those of us who have followed the pangs not only of the physical but also of the spiritual and cultural rebirth of Israel are aware of the great role Bialik played in the rise of our Renaissance Movement and in shaping the character and soul of the new Judaea. It was he who picked up the thread of our history, which had been broken by centuries of bondage, and reunited it with our present and our future. For Bialik is the continuation of the Bible, and with his appearance, "Nevuah"—genuine Hebraic prophecy, which had ceased during our long centuries of exile, was reborn in Israel.

It would be futile to attempt to appraise in the space of one article the form and contents of Bialik's poetry, his monumental contribution to Hebrew Culture, or any one of his attributes as a creative genius. At this moment we are concerned only with Bialik the Prophet who awakened the consciousness and conscience of his people and led them to the road of life.

He appeared at a time when the walls of the Ghetto were crumbling. He saw our best sons flocking to the vineyards of strangers, and saw clearly the calamitous result of the disappearance of the old Beth Midrash on our existence as a distinct people. He, contrary to the Maskilim to whom the Beth Midrash was the source of all our troubles, considered it the refuge and the stronghold of an eternal people. Through the Beth Midrash, Israel and his God saved each other. In the Beth Midrash, the Jewish people preserved its most precious treasure, the Torah; in it were shed the Nation's tears, its very heart and soul; in it the people placed all its consola-

tions and hopes, which were expressed in their deep faith in Redemption, in the coming of the Messiah:

If you would know the stronghold where your  
fathers

Salvaged their soul's desire and held the Law,  
Holy above all Holies to be saved;

If you would know the hiding place that kept  
Their mighty spirit and its essence pure,  
That, sated with reproach and calumny,  
Grey hairs sapped not the pleasantness of  
youth . . .

Turn to the Beth Hamidrash, antic, old

\*       \*

Then shall the heart inform you how your feet  
Stand on the threshold of our House of Life,  
And our Soul's treasure-house your eyes behold,  
If God has spared you of the holy spirit,  
Nor taken all His soothing from your heart,  
And rays of hope for better days than these  
At times illumine all its leagues of darkness,  
Brother of distress, know this to be  
A salvaged spark, small fugitive of flame,  
Saved by a miracle from that great fire  
Your sires kept ever ardent on their altar.  
Who knows but that the rivers of their tears  
Have borne and brought us hither, and their  
prayers  
Have loaned us of the Lord, and thro' their  
death

They bade a life be ours, life to world's end?

The Beth Midrash, however, had only a romantic existence. It was not part and parcel of a free and normal people living its own life in its

own land. It was a product of a homeless and landless people, which had been torn away from its natural life and left to subsist only on things of the spirit. It was spirit without matter, soul without body.

Bialik hated the Galuth. He showed it to us in all its nakedness, its sickness and ugliness. He cursed this life of ours in the Galuth, life without hope:

"My father is Black Poverty, bitter Exile is my mother; but it is not the wanderer's staff, nor the beggar's wallet I fear; for seven times more cruel, more terrible than these is life itself, the life that knows no hope, no radiance, the life of a hungry dog, fettered to its chain—O, curse upon you, Life that knows no hope!"

As we read Bialik's poems of sorrow and despair, we feel as if he himself had lived through in the depths of his soul all the trials and tribulations, all the sorrow and agony, the anguish and humiliation of his unfortunate people. He describes the horror of the pogroms in words which at times cause you to gnash your teeth in boundless rage and at times fill your eyes with bitter tears. In every word of his you hear the cry of a tortured and oppressed people, a cry which petrifies your bones and chills your very blood. In his "City of Slaughter," he describes the horrors of the Kishinev massacres. He leads you through the streets that are choked with the maimed corpses of the innocent victims and tells

A story of a belly stuffed with feathers,  
Of nostrils and of nails, of heads and hammers,  
Of men who, after death, were hung head down-  
ward,

Like geese, along the rafter.  
A story of a suckling child asleep,  
A dead and cloven breast between its lips,  
And of another child they tore in two,  
Thus cutting short its last and loudest scream,  
For "Ma—" was heard, but "Mamma" never  
finished.

And many, many more such fearful stories  
That beat about thy head and pierce thy brain,  
And stab the soul within thee, does she know.  
And, stifling down the sob within thy throat,  
Thou rushest headlong down the stairs and out—  
To see again the world of ev'ry day,  
The usual sun, outpouring unashamed  
A wealth of beams at every guilty threshold,  
And lavish of its store on worse than swine.

The following words, which fill us with shame  
and indignation at the degradation and helplessness  
of our people, have a bearing on our times,  
when many of us still seek salvation through  
"crying each his merchandise of woe!"

"A groschen for a wound, a groschen for a  
wound!

A groschen for a violated daughter!  
A groschen for a grandsire done to death,  
And for a son, a boy just ripe for marriage!"  
Go, tramping pedlars, seek the field of victims,  
And dig white bones from out your new-made  
graves,

And fill your baskets, evr'y one his basket,  
Go out into the world, and drag them with you,  
From town to town, wherever there's a market,  
And spread them out before the strangers' windows,

And sing hoarse beggar songs, and ask for pity!

And beg your way, and trade as heretofore  
In flesh and blood your own . . .  
Now flee, O son of man, for ever flee,  
And hide thee in the desert—and go mad!  
There rend thy soul into a thousand pieces,  
And fling thy heart to all wild dogs for food!  
The burning stones shall hiss beneath thy tears,  
And stormy winds shall swallow up thy cry!

Bialik is most bitter and exasperated about the weakness, the helplessness and the cowardice of his people, the descendants of the valiant Macabees and of the great martyrs of old. It is not so much against our enemies that he rages and thunders as against the apathy and lack of will-to-live of his own people:

Surely the people is grass, now do they fade like  
a blossom;  
Surely the people is slain—it is slain with a  
slaughter unending.  
Lo! when the voice of their God thunders about  
them forever,  
This is a people that moves not, a people that  
stirs not nor trembles.

\* \*

Surely the people wither, full of their vileness  
and venom,  
Yea, from the foot to the head, all of it rotten  
and worthless:

\* \*

Never will these awake, except that the scourge  
awake them:  
Never will these arise, with only the ruin to  
rouse them.  
Dried is the leaf from the tree, the hyssop is  
blown to the whirlwind;

Waste is the vine and the flower decayed—can  
the dew now revive them?  
Yes, when the trumpet sounds, when the banner  
at last is uplifted,  
Then shall the dead arise The Dead awaken and  
tremble?

Unlike many of the fathers of our Renaissance, Bialik was fortunate to live to see with his own eyes the beginning of Redemption. He lived to see the transformation of the Jew he despised into the new free and normal Jew of the Land of Israel. He lived to hear the song of revival bursting forth from the "last in the era of bondage, the first to be free"; he heard the song of Labor, Toil, and Harvest, the song of the new and heroic life that is unfolding in our beloved Land. He lived to see his own influence and his own part in the creation of the epic of our rebirth. He was fortunate to live to receive the love, the unbounded love and admiration of his people whom he led on the road to Revival and Geulah.

Bialik's mission to his harassed people can be summarized in the prophetic words he uttered in Jerusalem shortly before he left us: *"Out of the tempest of our life we hear the voice of History calling to us: A time for gathering! Woe to those who will not hear and will go forth again to seek relief and succor in the way of a New Dispersion!"*

July, 1940.

## MENACHEM M. USSISHKIN:

### HE SAVED THE HONOR OF HIS PEOPLE

*Address Delivered at Ussishkin Memorial Meetings in  
Western Canada.*

In a message President Roosevelt sent a short time ago to a Jewish gathering in New York, he stated that if humanity is to build a better order, it will have to be based on the ancient principles of Israel. At about the same time, a former High Commissioner for Palestine, Sir Arthur Wauchope, told the Overseas League in England that the world could and should learn from the example of the co-operative forms of life the Jewish people have already created in their ancient-new land. In the combined statements of these two men, we find the reiteration of the belief that both humanity and Israel will benefit greatly from the achievement of a synthesis between the best of the old and the new values of the Jewish people.

Menachem Mendel Ussishkin symbolized for us that synthesis, for in his personality was blended the best of the old and the best of the new. He himself expressed the need for this synthesis in his famous epigram: If we preserve the old while we disregard the new, we are like unto a tree that is possessed of strong roots, but is devoid of leaves and fruit. If, on the other hand, we insist upon the new, without retaining the basis of the old, we are like unto a tree that is covered with beautiful leaves, but whose roots are gradually decaying. Neither of these trees can be



of any real and lasting value! Ussishkin thus exemplified in his own life both the ancient and modern values and ideals of our people.

Ussishkin also symbolized the synthesis of idealism and realism in Zionism. Like Dr. Herzl, Ussishkin was a great idealist, and perhaps even a greater realist than the father of Political Zionism. He was at one and the same time a Chozeh, Navie, Lochem, and Magshim—a visionary, a prophet, a fighter, and a man of achievement. He, more than many of his contemporaries, attained both degrees of prophecy, that of Chozeh—a man with great vision—and of Navie—a man who has the courage to fight for the realization of his ideals.

As visionary, he always had before him the “end-ziel”, the ultimate goal of the complete national, cultural, and spiritual revival of Israel, and the restoration of Eretz Israel within its full historic boundaries. He never was ready to even consider the compromising of even one iota of his great ideal. Whether it was Uganda or partition, he, more than any other person, stood like a lion on guard that Israel, overwhelmed so many times by grim necessity and desperation, should not concede willingly to giving up, even temporarily, the smallest part of our homeland. Who knows, but for the courage and tenacity of that great man, the leaders of the Jewish people, weighed down as they were with the humiliation, suffering and agony of their scattered brethren, might have agreed to accept any other territory, even though temporarily, as a Jewish homeland. Such an event would, in my opinion, have been a shameful episode in our history. For by far

the greatest claim that we have to Eretz Israel is the fact that never did we give up even for one moment our unquenchable desire and yearning for the restoration of Zion. The acceptance even in theory of any other territory, would have been a blot in our glorious history, and a break in our eternal bonds with our historic land. It was Ussishkin, more than any other person, who saved our honor at that time by proclaiming that *he will not bow even before the majority in a matter that deals with severing our bonds with Eretz Israel*. It was he who exclaimed at that time that just as the majority of the Jewish people would not be able to have him give up the faith of Israel, so will no one have him give up the land of Israel. He had the courage to tell the leaders of that day that they only had the right to deal with questions relating to the actual work of rebuilding Eretz Israel, but that they had no right at all to even consider any other territory.

The same thing happened when Chalukah (partition) came up for consideration. He even refused to consider it. You will recall that the Zionist world was divided on the question of Chalukah. There were very influential leaders, among them Ben Gurion, Weizman and Shertok, who insisted that it was better to have an independent Jewish state in part of our land, than to give up this opportunity at a time when millions of our wanderers are knocking at our gates. At that time we had distinguished guests in Yerushalayim, Capt. Cazalet, a member of the British Parliament, and Miss Dugdale, a niece of Lord Balfour. They addresesd a closed meet-

ing at the Jewish Agency. Chaim Weizman was chairman of the meeting, which was attended by the leadership of the Yishuv. The long address delivered by Cazalet made a deep and lasting impression on me. At times, during his address, I was red in the face when he pointed out that the Jewish people did not make a real endeavour to rebuild Zion when the opportunity presented itself. The essence of his remarks was that considering all the circumstances, it would be best for us to accept the offer to establish a Jewish State in part of our land. When he finished, there were several groups of those present discussing among themselves the speaker's remarks. I was eager to know Ussishkin's reaction to Cazalet's speech. I do not remember the exact words of Ussishkin: That is not important. I do know that the conscience of our tortured and heroic people spoke through him when he said, in essence, that a people may be forced by the might of the sword to give up temporarily independence or parts of its land, but that if a nation negotiates willingly about signing away even the smallest parts of its land, that such a people is not worthy of and will not achieve liberty and independence. Recent events have borne out these words. We see today that people who cherished liberty and dignity allowed their homes to be destroyed and their lives to be extinguished for those things without which life is not worth living. To Ussishkin, and through him spoke the consciousness of Israel, our restoration in our own land was an immutable fact. To him the determining factor was our own will for Geulah, for redemption. All the other factors were

mere obstacles which had to be overcome. It was, therefore, no mere accident that he was the President of the Jewish National Fund. It was natural gravitation when he assumed the great and difficult tasks of achieving our cherished goal through real acts, through the acquisition of the soil of Israel. He expressed this in words and in action. At the time of the Uganda episode he issued the slogan. "We will build the charter from the bottom up." This idea is best expressed in his epigram, "When the children of Israel will redeem the soil of Israel, then the land of Israel will redeem the children of Israel." And, "If the soil of Israel will belong to us, ten Passfields will not be able to destroy us; if the soil of Israel will not belong to us, ten Balfours will not save us."

Dr. Herzl foresaw many years ago that a new generation of Maccabees will rise and will bring liberty to our people. If that prophecy has now come through, it is because that generation has been nourished and reared by men like Ussishkin. They brought up a generation which is determined that once and for all we must find redemption within ourselves, a generation which knows that there is no help but self-help, there is no salvation but self-salvation, there is no redemption but self-redemption, that we must ourselves find our place among the free and great nations of the earth.

Ussishkin lived to see the fruits of that generation. He lived to hear the vow of our youth in Eretz Israel, "We will be worthy of the Maccabees." Those young men and women are now fighting, are now giving their blood to defend

the honor and future of our people. A day will come when people will lay down their arms, and their representatives will meet at a Peace Conference to determine what will constitute peace. Our cause will also come up. Nothing will be found wanting on the part of that generation of new and free Jews of our reborn land. The weight of their sacrifice for the freedom of humanity and Israel will have its influence on the decision that will determine the fate of our people. At this moment, however, one cannot help recall the words of the pioneer and writer Joseph Chaim Brenner who, at the time of the defense of Tel Chai, uttered these words: "The heart of Israel," said he, "is alive, but what of its limbs—are they alive, too?" Are they, too, sensitive to the sufferings and agony of the millions of our oppressed people; do they, too, tremble with joy and ecstasy at the opportunity for self-revival and self-redemption? Are they, too, ready to follow along the road paved for us by the unshakeable faith, superhuman courage, grim determination, and selfless devotion of men like Menachem Mendel Ussishkin?

## RELIGION AS A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Moshe Rabeinu, the greatest teacher of all times, gave us a profound maxim when he said, "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations." For man must always shape his life in the light of his past experience, if he is to take up where his predecessors left off in the clearing of the thorny road that leads to the summit of human achievement.

Rosh Hashanah, the beginning of the year, challenges man to take stock of the past year, to revise and re-value his life. This Rosh Hashanah finds us at one of the main junctures in the age-old, titanic struggle between God and Satan, between good and evil, between beauty and ugliness; or between the creative forces which tend towards Unity and Harmony, and those powers that work for conflict and chaos. At this moment in the history of man, we can truly say with the prophet Isaiah, "For behold darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness nations."

It is indeed fortunate that "out of the strong came forth sweetness," that in the suffering of humanity there is also an element that ennobles, that rouses the imagination and conscience of man, and awakens him to heroic action. Throughout the History of humanity, disasters have set man thinking and have led him forward to greater heights of achievement. The present catastrophes thus has its hopeful element in the fact that we can see the present eruptions as the agony and pangs of a new birth, in the fact

that man is becoming conscious of his eternal quest for the good and beautiful way of life. For a while it seemed as if man had forsaken the spirit and the soul, and had set to build another Tower of Babel which would revert man to the jungle or lead him to his complete destruction. We have reason to believe, however, that we *are learning* from the past, that we *are* gradually becoming aware of the immutable fact that we must learn to co-operate with one another as individuals, communities and nations, or perish from *God's earth*.

We thus find that every person of mind and conscience faces the present dilemma with the question "Le-an?", "Where are we heading to, and wherein lies our salvation?"

It seems to me that President Roosevelt gave the answer to that question when he emphasized some time ago that if we are really to build a better world, it will have to be based on the ancient principles of Israel. In other words, if man is to be saved, he must re-embrace Religion as a way of life. I consider it a sad commentary that it should be necessary to point out that Religion is essentially a way of life; that rather than being a set of dogmas, or something that is of personal interest to the individual and his Creator, Religion is, in essence, a builder of human life and organizer of human relations. I believe that when President Roosevelt speaks of the ancient principles of Israel, he refers to those three great and eternal principles that are expressed on Rosh Hashanah by the prayers of "Malchuyoth, Zichronoth and Shofroth."

By "Malchuyoth" we express our belief in the Unity of God and the Cosmos; in other words,

that there is purpose in the Universe, and that man is therefore a responsible, moral being who must seek and strive "to construct the world in accordance with the rule of God, who is the very essence of Truth, Justice, and Beauty, and whose commandment to man, in the words of the prophet Michah, is: "He has told you O man, what is good, and what God requires of you; to do justice and love mercy and walk humbly before your God."

By "Zichronoth," we give expression to our realization that we can always look back and reconsider our ways, with a view to TESHUVAH, to repentance. In other words, we express our faith in the goodness and greatness of man, that man was *indeed created in the image of God*, that somewhere within man lies hidden that divine spark which will eventually lead him to achieve the great synthesis between the "Etz Hadaath and Etz Hachaim", between the knowledge of facts and their utilization for the good of man, or—what seems to me to be the real problem of our generation—the *achievement of the synthesis between Science and Religion*.

I believe it was Professor Whitehead who pointed out that the triumphs of modern science have been made possible only by the superb and unshaken confidence in the rationality of the Universe. My interpretation of this statement is that all the practical benefits of modern science that we enjoy today are due to those early Hebrew giants who soared into the heavens and found Reason, Unity, and Purpose. The trouble with modern man is that he wants to retain the fruits of the Tree of Knowledge without adhering to the Tree of Life; in other, words, to



make use of science without religion, which—in Hebrew thought—is synonymous with ethics. It therefore seems to me that the salvation of man lies in his realization that religion is ethics, and that science must be made to conform with religion, which according to Hillel, is summarized in the precept "What is distasteful to you, do not to your neighbors."

By "Shofroth", when we blow the Shofar, we proclaim our profound faith in the possibility of individual redemption, national redemption, and world redemption. We declare that man is capable of finding salvation within himself, of breaking asunder the chains which have bound him to injustice, oppression and slavery.

Herein then lies the hope of both mankind and Israel, in our knowledge that the leaders and prophets of today are inspired and guided by those religious-ethical principles that our people have given to mankind.

It is no mere accident that we find Great Britain and the United States of America in the fore-front of the defence of Liberty, the value of human life, the dignity of man, and the freedom of the intellect to continue to soar into the high heavens. For the individual and national life of these two great peoples is based primarily on the Hebrew heritage of "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it." It was certainly the inspiration of the Book of Books that made the Fathers of the American Revolution lay at the foundation of the Republic "Thou shalt proclaim liberty unto all thy inhabitants". It is directly from our eternal Bible—the fountain-head of human life—that all civilized men have drawn their passion for justice, their courage to

maintain human freedom and dignity, and their love for truth and beauty. In our own day, Roosevelt, Churchill and other leaders have resorted to the Bible to find solace, faith and courage. Is it mere vanity to say that when Churchill and Roosevelt proclaim to us the four freedoms, they speak, as it were, the Hebrew language, the language of the Book of Books, for they merely reaffirm the ten commandments proclaimed at Sinai thousands of years ago, and the fiery denunciations of the Hebrew prophets of old against tyranny, brutality and slavery. We can therefore believe the sincerity of Vice President Henry Wallace, who—in seeking the road to a better world order—points to the eternal values of the Jewish people, which means nothing else but that the future of civilization depends on the renewal of the prophetic dream and on the acceptance of the *fundamental* biblical heritage as our way of life.

To us, to the Jewish people, there is a great and profound challenge in the words of Vice-President Wallace, when he says that "God planted the seeds of liberty, truth and justice in the Land of Israel, which in turn were proclaimed to all mankind by the people of Israel." Mr. Wallace goes on to say that the Jewish people were prevented from seeing the universal realization of these principles because their national life was destroyed by the Romans, who were the spiritual fathers of present-day Germany. Mr. Wallace therefore believes that it has fallen upon the U.S. to bring to fruition the task that was assumed by the Hebrews thousands of years ago. The challenge to us lies in the question whether the U.S. is to be our

heir or our partner. There is no doubt in my mind that no truly free man will deny that in the end there will prevail the Hebrew conception of Adam B'zelem Elohim, that man in general, all men, are created in the image of God, as against the atrocious creation of the diseased, insane Nietzschean imagination, of a superior man, the blond German beast that will rule the world. There seems to be, however, a question in the minds of some people as to whether the Atzamoth Hayeveishoth, the dry bones of the bruised and bleeding Jewish people will rise again and become a partner with other great nations in the reconstruction of man's life. I believe with Disraeli, who in his inimitable way expressed thus the eternity of Israel: "The vineyards of Israel have ceased to exist, but the eternal Law enjoins the children of Israel still to celebrate the vintage. A people that persists in celebrating its vintage although it has no fruits to gather will regain its vineyards". I say, with Albert Einstein: "The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, an almost fanatical love of justice, and the desire for personal independence—these are the features of the Jewish tradition which make me thank my stars I belong to it. Those who are raging today against the ideals of reason and individual liberty, and are trying to establish a spiritless state-slavery by brute force rightly see in us their irreconcilable foes. But so long as we remain devoted servants of truth, justice and liberty, we shall continue not merely to survive as the oldest of living peoples, but by creative work to bring forth, as heretofore, fruits which contribute to the ennoblement of the human race".

I believe that when the Kingdom of God is established on earth, when man will understand that to be religious is to live the good and just life, both parts of Isaiah's prophecy will be fulfilled, the part where he speaks of "and it will come to pass in the end of days when people shall not lift up sword against people, nor shall they learn war any more"; and also that part where he proclaims "For out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the word of God from Jerusalem." I firmly believe that Israel can and will have an important part to play in achieving the great synthesis between Science and Religion, which—we hope—will guide all humanity to ever greater heights.

Rosh Hashanah, 1942.

## *Some of the Author's Observations We Have Liked:*

### EDUCATION

1. Education is a sacred, magnificent, and inspiring art. It is the greatest of all the arts, for the educator-artist must find within himself the fine tools with which to mould, shape and unfold the most complicated, the most mysterious, the most fascinating, and the most beautiful of God's creations—the human mind and soul. The educator-artist is himself possessed of the divine spark, which he seeks to infuse into the hearts of others.

2. Our children's ignorance of the most elementary knowledge of Zionism, and of modern Jewish life inside and outside of Eretz Israel is appalling. That is why the graduates even of our so-called "good" schools do not constitute the sources from which our youth movement should and could draw its forces.

3. A lady once asked me: "Why do not our schools produce "good" Jews?" My answer was: If you observe the educational programs and methods of those schools, you will find that it is not their aim to produce good Jews!

4. How can the state of Jewish education be anything but sad, if a majority of those who—to a large extent—determine what a Jewish education is, consider it worthwhile and sacred to force our children to memorize a host of insignif-

icant, unrelated details concerning periods of thousands of years ago, while those same people consider it a waste of time, if not sacrilegious, to acquaint our children with the important facts of our present life, a knowledge of which is essential for their physical and mental well-being.

5. It should not require a great deal of knowledge or intelligence to understand that if it is important for our children to know how our people lived in the days of Joshua and the Judges (which importance nobody denies), it is at least just as important for them to know how our people live and struggle in our own day. Surely the conquest of Tirath Zwi and Chanitah by our Chalutzim is just as important for our children as the conquest of Jericho by Joshuah thousands of years ago!

## YOUTH

1. Youth is the eternal hope of mankind for the creation of a better world. Every generation sees in youth the realization of the things which still remain in the realm of the ideal. Without this hope, our present struggle would be like a mere scramble among the beasts of prey in the jungle. We must therefore give our utmost attention to the cultivation of a healthy generation of independent, courageous men and women possessed of understanding, dignity, and willingness plus ability for harmonious and creative living. We believe it to be an axiom that without the building of a generation which will possess those qualities, no better world will be created, notwithstanding the Atlantic Charter and the good wishes and declarations of any men, no matter how great and sincere they may be.

2. Because of the abnormality of Jewish life in the Galuth, we have many young people with naked, torn souls, who are searching for meaning in life, for the sense of belonging to something and to somebody, and for completeness and genuineness in whatever they are.

3. I am convinced that our movement will never strike roots in this country if Zionism will not be presented to our youth as a philosophy of life, as a movement whose goal is not only the reappearance of the Jews as a people, but also the organization and revitalization of Jewish life in those countries where Jews can still live and create in some measure of freedom.

4. Youth must realize that it is they who will form the substance of the rising generation, and that it is therefore they who must set out to build the Holy Temple that will contain that substance.

*The Histadruth.*—If the work of the Zionist Movement may be likened to the playing of a great symphony, then the composer of that symphony is the Histadruth, the collective will, devotion and toil of all those tens of thousands of simple, genuine Chalutzim who believe in the willingness and ability of man for co-operative-harmonious living, and who seek to translate into a Reality what appears to be a Utopia.

*Spiritual Wandering.*—We must realize that it is the task of the Zionist Movement to stop not only our physical wandering, but also our cultural and spiritual wandering.

*Scattered Jewish Communities.*—I am convinced that the scattered Jewish communities

throughout Canada will become part of that movement or organization that will devote sincere attention to their Jewish needs and problems.

*Jewish Declaration of Independence.*—Let us, therefore, realize once and for all, that if we are to have a Declaration of Independence, we must be prepared to write it ourselves—with our own toil, with our own sweat, with our own tears, and with our own blood.

*Faith.*—A great flame of liberty was kindled by prophets, idealists, and pioneers in Israel. Though European Jewry now lies prostrate, we know that in cellars, in underground shelters, our young people everywhere are continuing to weave the beautiful dream of freedom. All those flickering lights will some day merge into one huge fire that will overcome all problems, all obstacles, and will definitely and finally restore the people and the land of Israel!









